



Ben Whitaker Co-founder Kerbo Charge

Kerbo Charge is a brilliantly-simple solution to home charging, where there is no off-road parking or driveway. Its founder, Ben Whitaker, explains

360 What is Kerbo Charge?

BW Kerbocharge is a channel for 7kW charging cables that is fitted into the pavement outside your house. It means that people with terraced houses, and those who don't have a driveway, can get their charging cable from the domestic charger on their house to their car parked outside, without creating a trip hazard. It means that they can get five to ten times cheaper charging than using public chargers.

With the super-length cable, you can charge in any of the three spaces outside your home, the one directly in front and one on either side of that.

Most people with an EV only need to charge once or twice a week, so, as long as you can get to one of those spaces that often, it'll work for you. We're also encouraging the sharing of Kerbo Charge facilities, where several people have them in a single street. This will make it easier for everyone to charge cheaply, while the council gets the benefit of expanded charging infrastructure without bollards blocking the pavement.

To use a Kerbo Charge cable, you simply lift the flap and run the cable into the groove, then click it closed again. To remove it, you just pull the cable out and click the cover shut.

Kerbo Charge is manufactured in Derby and we are at full-capacity production.

360 What's the process of getting one installed?

BW You write to the council requesting to have one fitted. It looks at your location to check there are no double-yellow lines or other issues. Once approved, you simply pay the money and get it installed.

We see it as a way of making it possible for the people that we most want to switch to EVs - those living in high-density residential areas, where we really need 'green tailpipes' - to achieve that goal. They're the ones that currently have the worst experience of switching to EVs.

"Kerbo Charge means that those without a driveway can get five to ten times cheaper charging than if they use public chargers"

If you want a Kerbo Charge, generally you can do it directly through us. Just put in your postcode, we'll then assess where you are and direct you to the right council website to fill out the application form. Alternatively, you can go direct to the council.

On an increasing number of council websites, right next to the dropped-kerb application form is one for a Kerbo Charge application.

Councils own the pavement and must issue a permit for a Kerbo Charge installation, these typically cost around £200. This isn't done on a national level, we have to get each council to approve Kerbo Charge. If your council area isn't covered, we provide a template email to send to them to request approval.

The process is cheaper and easier than having a kerb dropped, and it takes about one-hour on site. Installers cut a groove in the pavement, put some bedding mortar in, pop the channel in - which has been cut to length - then put some sealant around the edges and it's done.

360 What is the scale of the business as it stands?

BW We're working with about 24 councils at the moment. Generally, we don't fit them - the council or an approved sub-contractor will do that.

Every time we fit a Kerbo Charge, we're taking pressure off the existing charging infrastructure, and users can benefit from sustainable midday-solar and nighttime-wind-generated electricity.

360 How important is trust when launching a brand-new product like this?

BW Councils have to be sure that bits of infrastructure going into their pavements are long-term and safe assets - they're not a trip-hazard or likely to cause electrical issues, and they're not going to fall apart after a couple of winters.

To reassure them, we're running numerous pilots and trials in different areas, with different types of pavement and properties. This way, we can be 100% certain that the product is right.

Cross-pavement charging systems now have the backing of a £350 government grant, which shows a high level of confidence in what we're doing.

I can't help but be excited about a simple intervention that has a big impact on the 40% of residents that don't have a driveway and access to cheaper off-road charging.